

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING FEBRUARY 9, 2010--6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION: Pastor Nathan Riley-Eternal Word Kingdom Ministries

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLLCALL: All present except for Ron Widing who was absent. Office Manager Katie Minchuk stood in for Clerk-Treasurer Gene Guernsey who was absent.

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, REMONSTRATIONS: Mr. Hardaway asked Katie to read a letter from Karen Tallian, State Senator from District 4:

Dear Mr. Hardaway:

Thank you for informing me of the recent decision of the Merrillville Town Council to support the rebuilding of the Cline Avenue Bridge. Much discussion has taken place on this subject, and it is important that I know the thoughts of local citizens.

I want to stress to you that this concern is not being ignored, and I realize the serious economic effects of this closure. Of the varied topics we address at the Statehouse, a majority of our attention this session is placed on jobs and economic improvement. The permanent closure of the bridge is certainly a factor in the growth of Northwest Indiana businesses. We must be proactive now in order to ensure a more secure future and prevent the situation from worsening.

I want you to know that the Northwest Indiana legislative delegation is actively working on a Cline Avenue replacement project to ensure the area's traffic needs are met. With the additional support of you and the Merrillville Town Council, I am reassured in my belief that the rebuilding of the bridge would be most beneficial to surrounding areas.

Thank you again for contacting me, and I hope you will keep me informed of future decisions of the Merrillville Town Council. Sincerely, Karen Tallian

Mr. Pettit made the motion to add to the agenda Resolution 10-04 and Mr. Huish second it. 6/0 voice vote to approve was made.

CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval February 9, 2010.

B. Approval of January 26, 2010 Town Council Meeting Minutes

Mr. Shudick made the motion to approve both and Mr. Pettit second it. 6/0 voice vote made to approve

STANDING COMMITTEES:

BUDGET & FINANCE: Mr. Pettit announced that a committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 17, 2010 at 5P.M. All department heads are required to attend.

PUBLIC WORKS: Mr. Pettit asked about the jobs bill at the workshop. Mr. Huish said that they have to go to the workshop first.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS: The NIRPC Transportation Policy Committee Meeting was this morning & they are going to have a stake holders meeting for the jobs bill 2nd round of ARRA funding Tuesday, Feb. 23rd. stp group 1 at 10 am same day and CEMAC funding 9am, Fri., March 5th. Mr. Pettit would like to possibly submit applications for public works and police dept. projects.

Mr. Pettit said currently there were 2 successful bids: 73rd Ave. resurfacing bid of 631,724.65 awarded to Walsh & Kelly by the state and Harrison/Madison for 291,299.19 awarded to Reith-Riley Const.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: Mr. Shudick said that he and Howard Fink met with Forest Financial to negotiate the insurance for the employees for next year.

PUBLIC SAFETY: Mr. Shudick said a grant for Police & Fire Equip.was filled out & completed and sent to Pete Visclosky's office today.

PARKS & RECREATION: Mr. Sylwestrowicz read in the paper a compliment received from the Merr. Chamber of Commerce regarding the Merr. Parks about a good job from Parks Director Terry Weems.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS: NO REPORT

ELECTIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS: Mr. Shudick announced the first 4th of July parade meeting will be held at 11am.

Richard Hardaway also said the Municipal Government Week –May 10-14

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: NO REPORT

UTILITY LIAISON: NO REPORT

GENERAL ORDERS:

FIRST READING ORDINANCES:

ORDINANCE 10-04

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, fixing the salaries and pay for employees of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana for the calendar year 2010. Motion to approve made by Mr. Shudick and Mr. Goralczyk second the approval. Mr. Pettit asked if there were any changes and Mr. Hardaway read SECTION 4, of ORD. 10-04, WHICH THIS IS A CHANGE IN THE ORDINANCE, BUT NO SALARY CHANGE JUST VERBIAGE. 6/0 roll call vote to approve was made.

ORDINANCE 10-05

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana, authorizing the issuance and sale of bonds of the Town for the purpose of funding a certain judgement entered against the Town, together with expenses in connection with the issuance of bonds on account thereof, and appropriating the proceeds derived from the sale of such bonds for such purpose. Mr. Pettit made the motion to approve and Mr. Shudick second it. 6/0 roll call vote to approve was made.

SECOND READING ORDINANCES:

ORDINANCE 10-01

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, creating a line item for unemployment purposes in the Parks and Recreation Budget. Mr. Huish made the motion to approve and Mr. Pettit second it. 6/0 roll call vote to approve was made.

ORDINANCE 10-02

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, mandating five furlough days for all town employees. Mr. Huish made the motion to approve and Mr. Shudick second it. 6/0 roll call vote to approve was made.

ORDINANCE 10-03

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, appropriating additional monies within the Police Equipment Fund of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana for the year 2010 not included in the current budget. Mr. Goralczyk made the motion to approve and Mr. Shudick second it. 6/0 roll call vote to approve was made.

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION 10-04

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Opposing Legislation To Eliminate Or Restructure Township Government. Whereas, the Town of Merrillville has numerous cooperative arrangements with Ross Township, including:

1. Agreements assuring fire protection is jointly provided in a tax-efficient manner to residents of both the Town and Township; 2. Ross Township owns two of the five buildings providing fire protection to the Town and numerous fire apparatus units protecting the Town and Township; 3. The Town and Township jointly sponsor holiday programs providing services to our needy families; 4. The Town and Township have a joint health and life insurance program for our employees; 5. The Town and Township jointly operate and fund the Merrillville/Ross Township Veterans Memorial Park; AND WHEREAS, the joint services are operated to prevent duplication of services and minimize taxes to our citizens; AND WHEREAS, the Township Assistance program and energy assistance program provide locally available essential critical services to our needy Town residents; AND WHEREAS; the Township provides these services in a cost-effective manner, as evidenced by the Township tax rate being less than 1% of the total tax rate for the Town/Township Taxpayers; AND WHEREAS; transferring these duties to county government would create hardship for our needy citizens and ultimately increase property taxes for these services; THEREFORE, the Town of Merrillville supports the continuation of Township services and opposes any legislation to eliminate or restructure Township government.

Mr. Sylwestrowicz made the motion to approve and Mr. Huish second it. 6/0 voice vote approved.

BZA ACTIONS: NO REPORT

Petitioner:

Owner:

Location:

Request:

OLD BUSINESS: Mr. Huish discussed the fire hydrants in Lincoln Utilities. Mr. Huish made the motion to approve sending a general letter to request to take over the hydrants to American Water Utilities. Mr. Spires said he will look into this on Wednesday & will get back to Lance on Friday-12th. American Water said they will take over the the hydrants. It is now called UTILITIES, INC.

NEW BUSINESS:Mr. Pettit announced the Nirpc notice is as follows: The Indiana Economic Development District created for Lake, Porter, & Laporte Counties that they will allow us to apply to the US EDA for infra-structure grants that promote economic development. A 50-50 match and the deadline is this Friday the 12th at 4:30.

PUBLIC COMMENT:All public comment is recorded on cassette tape and kept on file in the Clerk-Treasurer's Office at Town Hall.

Ross Township Trustee John Rooda spoke. He wanted to say he appreciated the approval of Resolution 10-04.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Plan Commission Meeting, Tuesday, February 16, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

Town Council Workshop, Wednesday, February 17, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

Budget and Finance Meeting, Wednesday, February 17, 2010 at 5 p.m.

Joseph D. Shudick, Town Council President

Eugene Guernsey, Clerk-Treasurer